

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 PA-02 SP-02 ARA-14 IO-14 /065 W
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R 071948Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO USINFO WASHDC
USICA WASHDC
USNMR SHAPE
SECSTATE WASHDC 7117
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY PARIS

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 11169

USICA

USINFO FOR PGM/RC; PGM/PP; EU; STATE FOR EUR AND AF

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: BELGIAN MEDIA REACTION (JUNE 7, 1978)

1. LE RAPPEL WRITES THAT "MR. MOBUTU'S ZAIRE HAS ONLY ONE ENEMY; THE USSR AND THE ALLIES IT MANIPULATES. IT IS TOO OBVIOUS TODAY THAT BY ORGANIZING GUERRILLAS MR. BREZHNEV IS TRYING TO CREATE IN AFRICA THE CONDITIONS FOR A NEW YALTA. ZAIRE IS ONE OF THE CENTERS OF THIS GIANT STAKE. BELGIUM IS WILLING TO TAKE ITS SHARE OF THE DEFENSE OF AN ADVANCED POSITION BUT UNDER TWO CONDITIONS: FIRST, THAT MR. MOBUTU SHOULD STOP QUESTIONING ABSURDLY ITS INTENTIONS, AND, MOREOVER, THAT HE PROVE HIMSELF ABLE TO RESTORE IN HIS COUNTRY A MINIMUM OF DECENCY AND EFFICIENCY.'

2. LA CITE, DISCUSSING THE TASK OF THE WESTERN POWERS
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WHICH MET IN PARIS, WRITES THAT "THEY MUST SUCCEED IN LINKING WESTERN ECONOMIC AID AND AFRICAN MILITARY AID FOR WHICH THEY WILL PROVIDE THE LOGISTICS, TO A REFORM OF THE ZAIRE SYSTEM WHICH IS BOGGED DOWN IN THE CORRUPTION OF CIVIL SERVANTS, BLATANT SOCIAL INEQUALITY, AND THE PRIVILEGES OF ONE ETHNIC GROUP OVER ANOTHER ONE. THIS IS NOT ONLY A QUESTION OF BASIC MORALITY BUT ALSO OF EFFICIENCY.

EVERYONE OBSERVES, OFTEN REGRETFULLY, THAT THERE IS PRESENTLY NO ALTERNATIVE TO PRESIDENT MOBUTU'S REGIME. THE LATTER KNOWS VERY WELL THAT WILLY NILLY THE WEST MUST SUPPORT HIS COUNTRY. HE SEEMS TO BELIEVE THAT THIS INCLUDES UNCONDITIONAL SUPPORT TO HIS REGIME. HE MUST BE CORRECTED. IN PRACTICE IT IS NOT EASY. BUT IT IS ESSENTIAL... NOTHING THAT WILL BE BUILT WILL BE STRONG IF A MINIMUM DEMOCRACY IS NOT INSTALLED IN ZAIRE AND IF SOCIAL AND REGIONAL JUSTICE DOES NOT WIN OVER THE PEOPLE. THAT NEITHER THE DOLLARS NOR THE WEAPONS CAN REPLACE."

3. MANU RUYS IN DE STANDAARD WRITES: "TO STATION AFRICAN GARRISONS IN ZAIRE PRESUPPOSES THAT THOSE BLACK UNITS CAN COUNT ON WESTERN LOGISTIC SUPPORT. IT MEANS THAT A NUMBER OF WESTERN COUNTRIES, INCLUDING BELGIUM, ARE -- MORE OPENLY THAN HAPPENED SO FAR -- COMMITTING THEMSELVES POLITICALLY IN FAVOR OF OR AGAINST CERTAIN REGIMES AND OPPOSITION MOVEMENTS. NOT ALL AFRICAN STATES ARE HAPPY ABOUT THIS. THEY WANT TO KEEP THEIR CONTINENT UNALIGNED, AT AN EQUAL DISTANCE FROM MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON. THE WESTERN COMMITMENT ALSO CARRIES THE DANGER OF SEEING A POSSIBLE EVOLUTION TOWARDS A FREER SOCIETY CHOKED. THE YOUNGER GENERATION, BETTER SCHOOLED THAN THE PIONEERS OF INDEPENDENCE, MUST RECEIVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY ITS ROLE. IT WOULD NOT BE RIGHT FOR THE WEST TO PUT A BRAKE ON OR TO MAKE IMPOSSIBLE AN EVOLUTION TOWARDS MORE OPENNESS THROUGH UNCLASSIFIED

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ITS SOLDIERS AND INDIRECT MILITARY SUPPORT OR THROUGH A CONSERVATIVE POLICY THAT FREEZES THE EXISTING CONDITIONS AND ALSO ABUSES. A PURELY STRATEGIC VIEW OF THE EVENTS LEADS TO WRY DECISIONS. THE CUBANS ARE NOT THE ONES WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CHAOS. THEY ONLY BENEFIT BY IT AND DO THEIR BEST TO EXPAND THE DISORDER FURTHER. THE SEEDS OF THE AFRICAN ILLNESS MUST BE SOUGHT ELSEWHERE. THEY ARE OF A CULTURAL, ETHNICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC NATURE. BELGIUM SHOULD NOT SUPPORT A POLICY WHICH, TO SAFEGUARD ITS OWN INTERESTS IN THE SHORT RUN, LETS THE BASIC AILMENTS SPREAD LIKE A CANCER. A WESTERN AID ACTION MUST LEAVE SUFFICIENT SPACE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN AFRICAN MOMENTUM OF ITS OWN..."

4. DE NIEUWE GIDS WRITES: "...FOR THE RAW MATERIALS SUPPLIED TO WESTERN EUROPE AND FOR THE ENTIRE STRUCTURE OF OUR ECONOMY AFRICA REMAINS VERY IMPORTANT IF NOT ESSENTIAL... WE HAVE NO INTEREST WHATSOEVER IN COVERING UP THIS ECONOMIC FACT AND WE HAVE NO INTEREST EITHER IN PLAYING THOSE RAW MATERIALS INTO THE HANDS OF OTHERS. EVEN IF OTHER TYPES OF REGIMES WERE TO INSTALL THEMSELVES IN THOSE COUNTRIES IT IS NOT CERTAIN THAT THE WEST'S SUPPLIES WOULD

BE ENDANGERED, BECAUSE THE AFRICANS UNDERSTAND THEIR INTER-
ESTS BETTER THAN WE THINK. AND THEY KNOW THAT THE EAST
BLOC COUNTRIES ARE NOT READY DIRECTLY TO JUST TAKE OVER
ALL PRODUCTS. BUT THE ISSUE IS THE ECONOMIC-INDUSTRIAL
COOPERATION OF AN ENTIRE CONTINENT WITH THE NINE EUROPEAN
COUNTRIES. THE LOME TREATY GROUPS 50 COUNTRIES INCLUDING
MOST AFRICAN COUNTRIES. IT IS A NATURAL DEVELOPMENT FOR
NORTH AMERICA, BLACK AFRICA AND EUROPE TO COOPERATE. THAT
COOPERATION MUST NOT BE ENDANGERED BY PERIODS OF UNSTABLE

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USINFO FOR PGM/RC; PGM/PP; EU; STATE FOR EUR AND AF

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS. ESPECIALLY THE AFRICAN TRIANGLE
OF ZAIRE, RWANDA AND BURUNDI EXPECTS POSITIVE HELP FROM
BELGIUM. IF THE WESTERN PARTNERS OF OUR COUNTRY ARE WIL-
LING TO MAKE A SOLID CONTRIBUTION TO THAT HELP, SO MUCH
THE BETTER. KORENGOLD

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